

“Shihan Fumio Demura: Sixty Years of Karate in America”

Shihan Fumio Demura’s martial arts journey is inseparably connected to **Itosukai, Sensei Dan Ivan, and the Genbu-Kai**, three pillars that shaped both his career and his international legacy.

Shihan Demura began his training in **Shito-ryu Itosukai karate** at the age of 10 under Master **Ryusho Sakagami**, one of the most respected figures in karate. Through years of rigorous practice, Shihan Demura rose to prominence and became recognized not only as a skilled practitioner but also as a gifted teacher. In **1965**, he traveled to the United States as the official **representative of Japan Karate-do Itosukai**, serving as the organization’s **Chief Instructor in America**. For decades, he tirelessly promoted karate and kobudo, introducing authentic Japanese martial arts to thousands of students across the country. His formal relationship with Itosukai ended in **2001**.

A pivotal figure in Shihan Demura’s journey was **Sensei Dan Ivan**, a U.S. martial arts pioneer and one of the first Americans to study karate in Japan. Introduced to Demura by martial arts historian **Donn Draeger**, Sensei Ivan extended the invitation that brought Shihan Demura to the United States in the first place. Their collaboration helped establish karate and kobudo as respected disciplines in America. The two remained close colleagues and worked together on various projects, including the co-authorship of the book *Advanced Nunchaku*, which played a key role in popularizing Okinawan weapon arts in the West.

Following his separation from Itosukai, Shihan Demura founded his own organization, **Shito-ryu Karate-do Genbu-Kai**, in **1999**, creating a home for his students and a vehicle for continuing his vision of traditional martial arts. Headquartered in **Santa Ana, California**, Genbu-Kai grew into a truly **international network**, with affiliated dojos across North America, South America, Europe, and Asia. Shihan Demura served as its **founder and chief instructor** until his passing **April 24, 2023**, dedicating his life to teaching, promoting, and preserving the spirit of karate-do and kobudo.

In **2025**, the year that would have marked **Shihan Demura’s 60th year of teaching karate in the United States**, his influence had already spanned generations of students. His legacy endures not only through the worldwide reach of Genbu-Kai but also through the countless martial artists he inspired, trained, and guided.

Through his early training in **Itosukai**, his partnership with **Sensei Dan Ivan**, and his founding of the **Genbu-Kai**, Shihan Fumio Demura forged a legacy that bridged cultures and generations, leaving an indelible mark on the history of martial arts.

